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ABSTRACT

This paper locates the phenomenon of self-managing schools within the framework of "fast capitalism" and identifies themes of organization central to fast capitalism, which are argued to also underpin the self-managing schools. "Fast capitalism" refers to the rapidly intensified integration of regionalized productive activities into the global circuit of capital, and the further penetration of consumerism. The paper argues that the self-managing school can be understood as an institutional expression of the postmodern/post-Fordist social relations, which have been shaped by an intensification of globalization. These tendencies have been crucial in shaping the transformation of the national state and educational provision, including the underlying grammar of self-managing schools. The penetration of the commodity form into the heart of the schooling enterprise shows how successful the productive units at the local level--under the guise of self-managing schools--have been in carrying the new social relations of "fast capitalism." These developments are seen to arise as a result of economic, political, and social struggles. The study of self-managing schools can focus attention on the shifting configurations of power, knowledge, time, and space (Aronowitz and Giroux 1991) that provide the basis for oppositional action. (Contains 38 references.) (LMI)

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"FAST" CAPITALISM AND "FAST" SCHOOLS: NEW REALITIES AND NEW TRUTHS

A Paper Prepared for the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association Conference, Division A, San Francisco, California 18th-22nd April, 1995.

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Creative Destruction in the Postmodern Era

Writing toward the end of the long boom and at the point of a breakdown in the class compromise which characterised it, post-Fordists and postmodernists of a variety of persuasions argued that the system had entered a period of major crisis, transition and transformation as a result of intensifying globalizing relations (cf Rustin, 1989; Jessop, 1990, 1993; Harvey, 1990; Lipietz, 1992; Smart, 1992). Some called this transformation of modernity "new times", others the "postmodern condition". While Francis Fukuyama[1] (1989) wrote of the "end of history" in the face of the collapse of the communist bloc and the rise of liberalism, Baudrillard (1989) talked of "the end of the social". In essence what these writers are referring to is a sea change in cultural as well as political-economic practices and institutional forms as a result of a shift away from modernism/Fordism to an appearance of greater cultural diversity,[2] a loss of faith in scientific reason, questions about the logic of progress, the end of certainty and more flexible and global forms of accumulation, under the broad category of postmodernism/post-Fordism. In many instances, the changes are believed to derive from transformations in the capitalist mode of production within a global context (Smart, 1992: 2).

It is within this postmodern context that schooling systems and the work of teachers are changing (c.f. Hinkson, 1991; Apple, 1993; Hargreaves, 1994). These shifts have permeating to the site level of schooling, as the process of "creative destruction" clears away the old, making way for the new (Harvey, 1990: 230). A series of contradictory but co-existing themes have emerged which now define relationships in schools. These themes include greater diversity at the same time as the imposition of controls; opportunities for teachers to have a say, when there is less to have a say about; greater uncertainty about knowledge at the same time that system-generated "dead certainties" dominate; and the ideological visibility of business in schooling and the economization of the nation-state while globalization tendencies create conditions whereby capital's contribution through taxes is increasingly "invisible". In essence these paradoxes create a world where everything means something else; an Alice in Wonderland world where, as Anderson and Dixon (1993) note, where our understandings are constantly turned on their heads and the

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[1] It is noteworthy that Fukuyama's position is entirely consistent with that espoused by the Club of Rome--the latter agenda documented in a fascinating account by Kees van der Pijl (1984).

[2] Hinkson (1991: 3) points out, and I agree with him, the paradox in the postmodern arguments about diversity; that is, that the computer and telecommunications, for example, have created not diversity but a unified space. In the same way, I wish to argue that what often parades as difference and diversity is largely the result of external appearances (such as packaging) rather than any substantive differences between the products.

demarcations between the real and the unreal blur. Despite these radical transformations taking place, and the seductions of lifestyle and choice, capitalism within the postmodern era continues to generate unacceptable forms of inequality, exploitation and marginality.

In this paper I wish to argue that the self-managing school can be understood as an institutional expression of the new postmodern/post-Fordist social relations. In other words, the underlying grammar of the self-managing school and the organisation of teachers' labour has been shaped by a multiplicity of forces arising from postmodern cultural forms, the emergence of more flexible modes of capital accumulation, and the compression of time and space relations. And while the neo-liberal vocabulary of quality, choice, deregulation, diversity and flexibility which dominates the discourse on the restructuring of schooling, this commonsensical and neutralising veneer masks an underlying terrain of ambiguity, contradiction and struggle involving complex shifts, displacements and rearticulations of power within the state and civil society. Thus, despite its appearance, the self-managing school embodies the new relations of "fast" capitalism and a new "regime of truth".

This claim begs a number of questions. To begin, what do I mean when I say "fast" capitalism? Further, in what ways are the capitalist relations of the postmodern era different to those which underpinned those of Keynesianism and Fordism? Finally, what shape and form do these relations take in the self-managing school? While there is an increasing body of critical literature on school-restructuring and the devolution of administrative responsibility to the local level emerging in countries such as Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and the United States of America (c.f. Ball, 1993; Smyth, 1993), most analyses focus upon the rearticulation of the state's power as a consequence of the collapse of the post-war Fordist/Keynesian settlement. And while the collapse of the post-war settlement within each of the national states is clearly a very important factor, most accounts of school restructuring and site-based management ignore (or at best fail to critically interrogate) those dynamics which have arisen as a result of globalization tendencies which states must also both manage and mediate.[3] This is largely because the conventional focus in modern sociology has centred upon a geo-political form of the national state. Within the postmodern era, however, this focus is somewhat difficult to sustain (Touraine, 1989). In other words, because the world has become increasingly

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[3] Here I am accepting Hargreaves (1994: 9) view of the postmodern condition as "a social condition where economic, political, organizational, and even personal life come to be organized around very different principles than those of modernity."

'globalized', *existing* sociological understandings of change have become less and less appropriate.[4] The emergence of post-Fordist flexibility and workfare, in juxtaposition to the rigidity of Fordism and welfare, signify a rapidly intensified integration of regionalised productive actitivities into the global circuit of capital , and the further penetration of the commodity form into institutional life and the lifeworld of ordinary citizens. It is this phenomenon that I have described as "fast capitalism".

My purpose will be to locate the phenomenon of self-managing schools within the framework of fast capitalism, then to tease out a number of themes or principles of organization central to fast capitalism which I will argue also underpin the self-managing schools. In this respect, the work of the regulation theorists, in particular Bob Jessop (1990, 1993) and Alain Lipietz (1992) , is helpful in illuminating the complex process of globalization and the rearticulation of state powers, together with David Harvey's (1990) analysis of the centrality of time and space to the social reproduction of capitalist relations. Both theoretical frames, with their attention on the postmodern/post-Fordist, help us move beyond those analyses which locate the phenomenon of self-managing schools within the modernist/Fordist paradigm. To undertake this task, I will begin by briefly outlining those globalizing tendencies which have resulted in significant changes within the national state, before sketching out in more detail the shape of the new state form as a result of the rearticulation of state powers. I will then turn to an elaboration of crucial themes arising from these transformations at the site level of schooling.

Globalizing Tendencies and "Fast" Capitalism

The international order and the role of the national state is changing (Harvey, 1990; Drache and Gertler, 1991; Cox, 1991; Holloway, 1994). While a complex pattern of interconnections has been evident for a long time,[5] as Held (1991: 157) notes, there has been a further internationalisation of domestic activities and an intensification of decision-making within an international framework. Given that globalisation is a contested phenomenon, it is important to be clear from the outset what it is that I mean when I use the term. For the purposes of this paper, I have accepted David Held's (1991) conceptualization of western *globalization* as involving two distinct phenomena: on the one

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[4] Hinkson (1991: 6) makes this point when he notes that "to focus upon state and education within postmodernity is unusual, they are neglected institutional spheres within writing on postmodernity. In other words, the theoretical tools for analysis are still drawn from the modernist paradigm."

[5] It is useful to keep in mind that colonialism represents a tendency toward globalization, and as such, is central to capitalist relations over the past several centuries.

hand political, economic and social activity which is world-wide in scope; on the other hand, an intensification of patterns of interconnectedness and levels of interaction between states and societies which make up the modern global system.

The collapse of the Keynesian/Fordist settlement which had underpinned a period of unprecedented economic expansion has been a crucial factor in the transition of national states into the global economy.[6] At the same time, the dark side of progress, with its alienated labour, social separation, bureaucratic irrationality and mindless consumerism, fanned a growing disillusionment within society. Oppositional impulses, critical of the thin veneer of rationality which characterised modern life, found expression in a range of social movements and individual politics. I am not suggesting this conjuncture of circumstances was the natural process of unfolding progress, or in other words, a teleology toward globalization. Rather, there is much evidence to suggest these shifts have been the outcome of deliberative strategies and struggles at a number of levels, including at the local, national and international levels. For example, the role of the Trilateral Commission, the Bielderberg Conference and the Club of Rome, along with other new right think tanks, such as the Fraser Institute in Canada, the Adam Smith Institute in Britain, the Heritage Foundation in the United States of America and the Institute for Public Policy in Australia--all largely representing transnational interests--has been crucial in promoting the collapse of the Keynesian welfare state (van der Pijl, 1989; Marchak, 1991: 93). The neo-liberal vocabulary of down-sizing, restraint and labour flexibility arose out of a carefully orchestrated position where New Righters sought to completely restructure the state in a number of national contexts. By the same token, national states--such as Canada--have been active in pushing forward the global agenda, for example through the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). This, despite the fact that the benefits to Canadians as a whole are largely illusory (Panitch, 1994), but the losses in jobs, wages and social programs quite real (Brym, 1989). At the same time, individuals have given record levels of support to reforming politicians such as UK's Margaret Thatcher, Canada's provincial Premier Ralph Klein, and US's Newt Gingrich, in the face of massive job losses and welfare reductions. Thus, the break with Fordism and the demise of the Keynesian welfare state has been the result, not only of crisis tendencies within Fordism itself (such as over-accumulation), but the assertion of a new ideology--a free-market

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[6] In this context, Fordism meant a system of mass consumption and production, a system of reproduction of mass labour power, a particular politics of labour control through unionization largely orchestrated by a Keynesian interventionist state, and an aesthetic based upon functionality and rationality. In essence, Fordism meant a new kind of rationalised modernity and populist democratic society.

logic--"unmediated by populist democratic visions" (Harvey, 1990: 126). In this, the new right ideology was able to successfully exploit the concerns of ordinary people and intellectuals from the right and the left over increasing state power, and in the process successfully shore up its own position. The ideology of the New Right was also exercised through other means. For example, in order to finance the restructuring of the economy in the 1980's, corporations and governments became big borrowers, especially from private banks (Cox, 1991). However, and this was the catch, the conditions for access to further funds was dependent upon closer integration into the world economy, the adoption of economic policies conducive to world economic interests, and a reconfiguration of labour market and social policies in line with neo-liberal interests. In particular, "the onus of adjustment has been placed upon labour and the more vulnerable social groups through cuts in government services, price rises in basic consumption items, unemployment, and pressures to accept sub-standard employment as a means of existence" (Cox, 1991: 338).[7] Orchestrating this process have been the key international agencies such as the OECD, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), along with an active (and often loud) public involvement of representatives of transnational capital in various aspects of the state's policymaking process.

A further important factor in intensifying globalizing relations has been the appearance of new technologies. This has facilitated the rapid internationalisation of production and money flows,(already unhinged by Nixon's unilateral act of cutting the U.S. dollar from the gold standard in 1979), enabling in a geographical sense an unprecedented level of economic expansion. As a result, transnational capital has been able to access markets and the productive resources of the globe as a whole. The massive surplus of funds, including the rapidly growing off-shore investment funds, could now be easily and instantaneously transferred from the core industrial countries to wherever in the world the conditions of capital valorisation loomed most promising. For the core countries and their workers, this meant a radical displacement of the key segments of the productive apparatus.[8]

Central to the globalization of production has been the shift from domestically-oriented demand-driven Keynesian economic policy under the auspices of an interventionist state, to trade oriented supply-side free-market economics managed by a contractual state

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[7] In recent months the United States version of this has been called "Contract with America".

[8] The emergence of free trade zones --for example the Maquiladora in Mexico facilitated by the free trade agreement, is a case in point. This is the fastest growing economic sector in Mexico. Around 40 per cent of the manufactured goods imported by the US now comes from Mexico. Mexican workers earn one twentieth of what a Canadian would earn (Brym, 1989: 202).

(Jessop, 1993). In other words, the emphasis for national states has been to move away from domestic production and consumption with its implied onus on managing consumption and production (with the welfare system typically used to manage this process) to international trading in a range of products and services (where there is now no need for concern for distributional mechanisms as the consumers are located outside of the national state) (Drache and Gertler, 1991). Within this context, education is viewed not only as a tradeable commodity within an international marketplace, but also as a site for trade (Barlow and Robertson, 1994). I will point to this issue later in the paper. This has resulted in a press for the deregulation of trading barriers to allow the freer movement of transnationals, their products and services across borders, along with a strengthening of government's powers *vis-a-vis* citizens and democratic interest groups (Marchak, 1991). Freeing up borders in this case means not only focusing upon those which separate one national state from another, or one province from another, but also the lines which demarcate public from private interests, for example business' rights of entry into public schooling and public provision in general. The "constitutionalization" of access rights for transnational capital to public education in Canada, as embodied in the NAFTA agreement, is a case in point (Panitch, 1994). Here, United States-based transnationals have "national treatment rights",[9] opening up local public schools to foreign ownership and investment. In this particular context, once Canadian public services have been privatised, they cannot be returned to the public jurisdiction without paying compensation to United States-based firms for the loss of future potential business (Calvert and Kuehn, 1993).

The realignment of domestic economies to that of the world economy has resulted in the increased internationalization of the national state, with the state's departments of Trade, Finance and Treasury (with their alignments to global capital and the international agencies) typically setting the restructuring agenda for the other government agencies. These changes within the national state have culminated in a shift in emphasis in domestic policy domains, such as education and training, toward the needs of the global economy. Consequently, domestic economic and social concerns are diminished; a shift which is discursively legitimated as the *inevitable* outcome of globalization. In these new arrangements, the state's domestic policy agencies like education appear to act as conduits to the international agencies (such as the OECD), with the information flow downward rarely critically engaged with. This is not to suggest that the state does not act as a buffer or mediator of global interests. The fact that the state appears immediately constrained in its

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9 Or as Gordon Laxer (1994: 4) argues: "transnational corproations are generously given citizen-like rights to bring in all the paraphenalia of corporate power."

response in fact highlights a feature of the globalizing relationship between the national state and the global agencies. The difficulties confronting the national state arise as a result of the fact that "the state is simultaneously confronted by the need to implement qualitatively new economic and social policies at the same time as its ability to act independently, either economically or socially, is strongly curtailed" (Dale, 1994: 4). In essence, the resolution to this dilemma faced by the national state is to deregulate, privatise, depoliticize and control[10] in an effort to legitimize the lack of capacity to act (Dale, 1994). The emergence of self-managing schools, whether as public enterprises, such as in Australia, or as private concerns like Charter Schools such as in Canada, New Zealand or the United States, are the direct result of the constraints arising from the internationalization of the state.

Fast capitalism thus arises as a result of the switch in activities from accumulation within the productive sphere to the sphere of circulation--in particular money capital. In other words, the bulk of profits now comes from the sphere of circulation, and especially from the capital markets.[11] It is made "fast" electronically. Furthermore, even within the sphere of production, heightened competition tends to make the technological competitive edge obsolete within a short period of time. The use-value in the process of capital valorisation is short; ephemeral, one might say. Similarly, top-level technological skills need to be constantly upgrading, even though this concerns only a small group of the student population at all levels of schooling and training provision. From the systemic point of view, the role of a system of self-managed schools is to steer or stream, through fiscal pressures and "natural selection" (I am alluding here to the mechanism of parental choice, and where some schools then win and others lose in the shift into the educational marketplace), the winners into market-determined special curriculum schools.[12] Through direct intervention in selected schools, the corporate sector is able to determine precisely the attributes of the workers that it requires; in the others, the socialization of the future workers is now also increasingly *direct* rather than *general.* This then provides a basis from which the top achievers are selected to feed into post-secondary education/training programmes or the workplace, who would then use their research skills and technical know-how to perpetuate the race for a competitive advantage. However, the important

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10 Dale is not suggesting here that the state relinguishes control; rather that the state has enabled the development of a range of controls through which capital's power over workers has been increased.

11 At the same time, capital must diversify between productive and financial markets; it is only in the productive sphere that value can be created.

12 Such as might be offered by particular Charter Schools, or schools who promote a particular "market" profile.

point to be made here is that the time required for the valorization of capital will inextricably continue to shrink. Because, at the same time, the share of profits will increasingly come from the sphere of circulation, thus limiting the interest of the investment capital in the sphere of production, where, nevertheless, the real value has always and will in any empirical world continue to be made in the future, fast capitalism, like the universe collapsing on itself, will inevitably end up in a "big bang".

Transforming the State: From Welfare to Workfare

Following on from the complex process of globalization and the collapse of the Keynesian/Fordist settlement, Bob Jessop (1993) has argued that a systematic process of "hollowing out" of the state is taking place; a process which has displaced the powers of the Keynesian Welfare State (KWS) upward, downward and outward. Jessop is not suggesting here that the state has become a hollow shell, with only an external artiface of power remaining. On the contrary, the state remains a crucial site for political struggles, and a strategic force in securing the conditions for capital accumulation for the reproduction of labour power. To facilitate the insertion of the national or regional economies into the global circuit of capital, the state must transform itself. This transformation is not for the convenience of counter-hegemonic forces to carry on with their struggles. In fact, it is precisely the opposite case. In that respect, the state-designated terrain available for political struggles has shrunk. Thus, the displacement of state powers to local, regional and international bodies "is not just a series of formal or tactical shifts but also the practical rearticulation of political capacities" (Jessop, 1993: 10). So while site-based management enables the state to displace some of the management tasks for schooling down to the local level and at the same time meet demands for local control, a raft of new powerful technologies, such as control over policy-frameworks, student outcomes and teacher licensing, all enable the state to steer from a distance (Ball, 1993: 66).

Jessop (1993) has described this emerging form of the state the Schumpeterian Workfare State (SWS). This conceptualisation of the state, while an ideal type, is theoretically helpful in understanding the transformed nature of the state's powers and interests. I I have already noted, whereas the Keynesian welfare state had favoured policies of full-employment, demand side management, and norms of mass consumption through welfare rights, the objectives of the Schumpeterian workfare state are defined as "the promotion of

product, process, organisational and market innovations; the enhancement of the structural competitiveness of open economies, mainly through supply-side intervention; and the subordination of social policy to the demands of labour market flexibility and structural competitiveness" (Jessop, 1993: 9). In essence the role of the SWS is to promote those policies which are directed toward the flexibility of consumption, production, skills and labour usage. With the shift away from domestic consumption to international trade, the SWS now has a diminished role in promoting local demand and in distributing citizenship entitlements. The role of the SWS now is to promote policies and programmes which enable the national state to compete in the global economy. In this respect, schools are therefore reconceptualized as unchartered marketplaces where a battle for the hearts, minds, stomachs and pockets of children take place. It is a place where goods and services are traded, children's consumer attitudes are shaped, and the unequivocal rights of business to function in all spheres of life are consummated (c.f. Apple, 1993; Barlow and Robertson, 1994). With diminishing funding to schools but tight policy framing, the local community is given the unenviable task of taking the tough decisions between a rock and a hard place. The only question the community is given little scope to ask is: "What is the rock doing there in the first place?!" The political difficulties which might otherwise have arisen for the state as a result of the international pressures to reconstruct its role, are now averted. Rather, the responsibility for these decisions is now the concern of parents, teachers and the local community.

The precise shape of the the SWS varies, and that this variation is dependent upon the political and economic terrain of particular national states. Nations with strong union movements, such as Australia, have pursued a *competitive progressive strategy* based upon a form of neo-corporatism. This form of the SWS, distinctive for its focus upon strategies to promote competitive success, is largely inspired by Swedish corporatism. At the level of public policy, the state has actively pursued a highly skilled, highly flexible and highly motivated labour force option, encouraging enterprises to take full advantage of recent technological developments in order to produce high quality commodities at high productivity levels through flexible production methods. The expectation is that a successful state will be able to sustain a substantial social wage if it connects welfare and education to the public promotion of flexible production and technological innovation (Panitch, 1994: 82). In this vein, all levels of education, from departments of education and training down to the local school level, are drawn into the process of reconstruction and transformation to conform to the principles of global competitiveness. Within this context, the fragile existence of the social and moral discursive terrain has even less scope

than it did in previous arrangements. Despite these profound limitations, the appeal of the competitive progressive strategy to social reconstructivists is that key social groups who would otherwise be locked out of shaping the neo-liberal agenda are given a voice. However, as Panitch notes, this voice is only audible as long as it does not "present a challenge to the structure of the state or the logic of global competitiveness" (1994: 84). An alternative strategy pursued by the SWS is described by Cox as *hyper-liberalism*; a strategy involving intensive privatization (for example of public education), liberalization (such as the removal of market barriers) and deregulation (as in the right to work legislation which effectively removes the requirement for workers to join a union, or in abandoning provincial controls over companies compliance with environmental standards, as is the case in Alberta, for example). Hyper-liberalism, as a strategic ideology, is evident in the restructuring of the New Zealand, the British and United States economies. Under the banner of a regional advantage these economies have welcomed the internationalisation of aspects of the domestic economic space.

The self-managing school can be seen to have been shaped by either the state's pursuit of the hyper-liberal or competitive progressive strategy. On the one hand, self-managing schools which operate within the public arena have largely been a product of those national states (such as Australia or parts of Canada) pursuing a competitive progressive strategy. While tightly managed in terms of its policy frame, such as specifications of student competencies and educational standards, consideration has been given to the promotion of skills in a discursive recasting of equity. More important, however, is that educational provision is still viewed as a public affair, despite the fact that schools are encouraged to form partnerships with businesses such as Apple MacIntosh Computers, Pepsi, Whittles and Goodyear to promote "work relevancy" and raise funds. As such, educational provision is still open to contestation within the public arena, as the protests over McDonald's involvement in New South Wales schools in 1993 attests. On the other hand, those self-managing schools which arise in contexts where the state is pursing a hyper-liberal strategy, such as Charter Schools, are now located within the private sector. This has encouraged a plethora of private corporations, such as Education Alternatives Inc. and BurgerKing into the educational marketplace, not only to shape the hearts, minds and appetites of a veritable crop of potential consumers and workers through its carefully crafted advertising and shaping of the "news" and advertisements (c.f. Apple, 1993) in search of profits. It is this latter version of fast capitalism--facilitated by hyper-liberal strategies pursued by the state--which finds its structural equivalent in "fast schools".

"Fast" Schools in the Postmodern Era

A number of organising themes central to the transformation of schooling, self-managing schools and the self-management of individuals are evident within the postmodern/post-Fordist era. For the purposes of this paper I would like to address those themes which distinctively mark out the new social relations of schooling. These themes include the devolution of responsibility for management to the site level, the flexible use of labour within the local school, the intensification of labour legitimized by the ideology of a "new professionalism", and the promotion of school-business "partnerships".

The devolution of management to the site level, or what has been described as vertical disintegration, is a key ingredient of post-Fordist arrangements (Watkins, 1993). A powerful central governing body feeds off "numerous smaller units which are satellites, subsidiaries or subcontractors to the powerful central unit" (Watkins, 1993: 137). By locating power within the centre through tightened controls and minimising the functional lines of responsibility downwards, administrators and teachers are then given the task of implementing the new agenda and at the same time determining and managing the "riot threshold" central to successful implementation. This has been referred to as management by stress. That is, the riot threshold refers to determining how much pressure can be placed upon teachers and students without losing control over the product. The separation of policy deliberations from implementation--ends and means, forces teachers into the paradoxical realm of technical uncertainty nested inside ideological certainty. These developments, as I have already argued, are part of a general move to displace the stress of the economic crisis and contradictions embedded within the globalisation tendencies down the line into smaller organisational units. At the same time, "the smaller unit acts as a shock-absorber in deflecting major local, social, fiscal and industrial crises away from the centre" (Watkins, 1993: 141). In this sense, the realm of technical uncertainty provides the scope for teachers to generate innovate responses to achieve targeted ends. At the same time, the climate of uncertainty renders teachers potentially helpless and therefore exposes them to the certainties imposed from above and outside. Packaged formulas can seem like anchors in an uncertain environment. A further important role for smaller units operating at the local level is that it is only at that level that the market relations can operate effectively. In this context, self-managing schools can be encouraged to compete with each other for clients and funds. This competition occurs not only between schools, as they attempt to carve out a new niche within the schooling marketplace, but between subject

departments within schools, as teachers attempt to stake a claim within the new enterprise (Robertson and Soucek, 1991). In this competition there are *winners* and *losers*, legitimated by the logic of *laissez faire*; the invisible hand of the market. However, far from being politically neutral, this conception of the self-managing school, in isolation from its neighbouring schools, is driven by a quest for money, power and status on which its survival depends (Watkins, 1993). Not surprisingly, these social relationships which underpin "fast schools" undermine any pockets of resistance or critical practice which might be seen to impede the capacity of the school to compete effectively.

The flexible deployment of teaching staff within the self-managing school, or staffing segmentation, parallels similar post-Fordist developments within the wider economy (Harvey, 1990; Drache, 1991; Robertson, 1994). The use of core, contract and contingency labour can provide a school, as a productive unit, with considerable flexibility in order to meet performance targets. In other words, flexible working arrangements refer to the ability of a unit to adjust wages to output and to the "cost" of its products (Drache, 1991: 258). The basic aim is to control labour costs, increase efficiency and more importantly, to discipline labour. There are three kinds of flexibility already apparent in the self-managing school. *Financial flexibility* occurs through cost-cutting, or slimming down the size of the educational workforce. The redeployment of over 1,000 teachers in 1994 in the recent round of restructuring in Alberta, Canada, and a similar number in Victoria in Australia, are cases in point. The challenge for the school, as the local unit, is to determine how best to use the remaining available resources to produce the same or better outcomes. *Functional flexibility*, on the other hand, refers to the more efficient use of permanent full-time employees through quality control, working smarter and continuous production. Schemes such as the *National Schools Project*, funded by the Federal Government in Australia, have focused upon schools as "systems work units". These schools have been crucial in piloting a range of approaches to "smart" production, including time-tabling, the use of work teams, volunteer labour and so forth (Chadbourne, 1992). Finally, *numerical flexibility* involves the closer tailoring of the size of the workforce to the use of part-time, contractual and temporary personnel. Within Australia, a number of proposals have surfaced directed toward the development of a smaller but more highly paid "core" labour force of teachers, supplemented by a tiered periphery made up of expendable semi-skilled and cheaper labour; parents, student teachers and teacher aides (c.f. Schools Council, 1990; Ashenden, 1992; Robertson, 1994). These patterns of labour flexibility are already apparent in schools operated by Education Alternatives Inc, in the United States. However, anecdotal evidence gathered in Alberta, Canada suggests that

the process of labour casualisation within self-managed schools, the result of cuts to education, has differential effects for males and females. For example, female early childhood teachers on casual rates received third of the hourly rate of pay to their male industrial arts colleagues. These developments suggest there is a need for research in mapping the dimensions of the changes facing teachers as workers.

A further theme within the self-managing school arises as a result of the compression of time and space (Harvey, 1990). In commenting upon this theme of modernity in general Harvey (1990: 230) remarks that when the conditions for accumulation are relatively easy, the incentives to innovate are relatively weak. However, "during times of economic difficulty and intensifying competition, individual capitalists are forced to accelerate the turnover of their capital; those who can best intensify or speed up production, marketing etc. are in the best position to survive". Nowhere is this theme more apparent than in the intensification of teachers' labour. Teachers are expected to confer on a raft of administrative detail as a result of the displacement of state responsibilities down to the local level. In a study on the impact of devolution on teachers in Western Australia, teachers reported that (i) they were required to constantly attend meetings for administrative or collegial purposes, (ii) accountability pressures had escalated, (iii) they were expected to be more entrepreneurial within the school and the local community, and (iv) the increasing scarcity of resources had led to greater conflict as a result of intense politicization. All of these activities took considerable time. In order to meet their commitments, teachers worked longer hours of the day and more days of the week (Robertson and Soucek, 1991). However, collaboration between teachers and with parents now took place paradoxically when there was less to collaborate about, and when teachers had less time to collaborate effectively. In other words curriculum frameworks, student standards and testing programmes are decided in arenas which have minimised opportunities for diverse debate leading to what Hargreaves has described as "contrived collegiality" (1994: 80). As Hargreaves notes "this propels people toward superficial solutions and the maintenance of surface appearances" (1994: 81). And this is precisely the point. Contrived collegiality is precisely that because it disguises a more sinister motive; a means whereby individuals are able to engage in surveillance of others as a form of self-regulation leading to workplace control and for increased productivity. At the same time, Western Australian teachers have sought to control the effect of the intensification of their labour though an ongoing work to rules campaign began in 1989 and still enforced in some schools in 1995. In this regard, Harvey (1990: 231) observes "attempts to speed up or intensify labour processes spark some of the strongest and bitterest of struggles between

labour and management." The pressure to break the power of the teachers' unions across Australia can thus be seen as part of that ongoingbattle between management and labour.

A final theme that I would like to address concerns not only the state's systematic promotion and development of partnerships between schools and the business community, but the opening up of the public sphere, and in particular all aspects of educational provision, as a full-scale private enterprise. The development of self-managing schools have been crucial to this enterprise. By reducing the funds available to local schools at the same time that an enterprise ideology is promoted, local schools have been encouraged to either seek resources from a willing business community. Alternately, business has sought to either coopt local schools to their productive endeavours, or to enter the new schooling marketplace in search of profitable activity. As I have already argued, the penetration of the market logic into schooling is furtherest advanced in those states sponsoring a hyper-liberal as opposed to a competitive progressive strategy in the restructuring of the private and public sphere. In this respect we are increasingly no longer a culture but an economy shaped by the logic of "fast capitalism", where those aspects of culture, such as art, family, politics, history, truth, privacy and intelligence are redefined (Postman, 1992: 48). The sheer speed at which these developments are occurring bewilders some observers. In the words of one teacher and commenting upon Pepsi's : "If people live in an eternal present, that serves the corporate interests quite well...It seems like all the direct influences are becoming more direct every day. Its like being in a room where the walls are c'osing in. It's almost bewildering the speed at which it is happening" (Roberts, 1994: 10).

The abundant examples of the rapid intrusion of fast capital into schools illustrates my point. In Australia, Apple MacIntosh computers ran a nation-wide campaign in conjunction with Coles, a large grocery chain. Schools participating in the programme asked students to collect receipts from Coles. Classrooms were pitted against each other in a weekly battle to bring in the highest totals on receipts. These were then carefully collated, totalled and recorded by a teacher in the school following a precise formula. Critical totals can be exchanged for an Apple computer; technology that is highly valued in the race to being more able to compete with neighbouring schools. These programs have a ripple effect on schools. Teachers involved work as unpaid salesmen and saleswomen for these big corporate bodies--Coles and Apple--while small retail outlets within local communities feel the pressure of the shift in trade to the large grocery chain. Bryan Palmer (1995) describes the invasion by Goodyear, a transnational corporation, of the small town of Napanee in Canada. The company sought support for the move from the local school community,

including students. And while there were oppositional voices within the community, Palmer notes that they were quickly ostracised and silenced. In essence, the school became a small productive unit of the company, managed by the same workplace relations. "Program Think", implemented within the school, was an oppressive system of regulation and surveillance where students were asked to regulate their own and others' behaviour as a form of self-discipline. "Program Fire", on the other hand, was a system of pink-slipping students who violated the rules of the job, such as coming late to class or not getting assignments in on time. In both cases, these direct forms of worker socialization, promoted a particular ideological view of the successful post-Fordist worker; the capacity to follow instructions, dependability, personal presentation and constant performance. At the same time, school students became involved in resolving production difficulties for the company in their industrial physics classes, thereby increasing the company's efficiency. As Palmer notes, these kinds of projects were viewed by the company as a type of "out-sourcing" or contracting out of the company's work . However, ."the workers only received the wages of incorporation and the price of the product was paid in kind with the bestowal of gifts" (1995: 36).

A second example describes the intrusion of companies, such as Pepsi, into the schooling marketplace. A landmark deal between Pepsi and the Toronto School Board in 1993 gave Pepsi monopoly rights to advertise its products on school property (Roberts, 1994: 8). For little more than a million dollars, Pepsi gained the right to install its dispensers in all schools across the city for three years and for what even the industry viewed as "a share of the gullet". Despite protests from teachers, students and health groups, Board trustees, believed there was little alternative available to them in the face of cost cutting. The fact that the local community is left making the decision to open the floodgates to corporate capital mediates the inevitable contradictions which confront the state. Michael Apple (1993) also writes on the explosion of deals between schools and the corporate sector, driven by a diminishing tax base available to the state as a result of tax breaks and tax reductions to minimise the flight of capital and attract in new money. School communities have, as result, welcomed the exchange of "free" technology in exchange for guaranteed audiences of Whittle news and advertising beamed in by satellite. A contract with Whittles Communication for a schools can mean that that school must be able to guarantee that "ninety per cent of pupils watch ninety per cent of the time...ten minutes of "news" and two minutes of commercials...every school day for three to five years" (Apple, 1993: 97). The numbers of schools that have signed on is staggering; over eleven and a half thousand schools under contact in the United States of America by 1992 (Apple, 1993: 98).

The emergence of Charter Schools onto the educational horizon represents only a further variation on the penetration of fast capital, but where the self-managing school is now located in the private rather than the public sphere. Charter Schools, it is claimed in grand Schumpeterian fashion, "will generate innovation and improvements through competition, attract entrepreneurs and reduce conflict" (Barlow and Robertson, 1994: 205). School-based management is a key step toward charter autonomy. The charter is a written agreement between a "non-profit" private body and a granting authority.[13] Because Charter Schools are grounded in a philosophy of the educational marketplace, schools must compete for the best students and for tuition dollars. In order to enter the competition successfully, school staffs must be reconfigured, and senior staff sought with expertise in capital development, fund-raising and marketing. As Barlow and Robertson (1994: 211) observe, corporations will increasingly spend educational dollars, not on taxes which might go some way to supporting an underclass as in the "welfare" state, but on "workfare" partnerships for the benefit of the few.

Conclusions

I have argued in this paper that the self-managing school can be understood as an institutional expression of the postmodern/post-Fordist social relations. More particularly, I have also argued that these relationships have been shaped by an intensification of globalization. These tendencies have been crucial in shaping the transformation of the national state and educational provision, including the underlying grammar of self-managing schools. The penetration of the commodity form into the very heart of the schooling enterprise and illustrated in the themes that have been developed in this paper, stand as disconcerting measures of just how successfully the productive units at the local level--under the guise of the self-managing schools--have been in carrying the new social relations of "fast capitalism". In undertaking this analysis, however, I am not suggesting that these developments are the inevitable workings out of some grand scheme over which we have no control; the logical outcomes of "progress" and "history". Rather, they are developments which arise as a result of economic, political and social struggles. With this in mind, multiple mappings of the terrain of self-managing schools help to focus our attention upon the "shifting configurations of power, knowledge, time and space"...the

[13] While it might appear that non-profit means precisely that, in essence it has the potential to be little more than a protective facade and an valuable device in money-making with all of the perks that some religious "charities" have been able to garner for themselves.

elements of discontinuity, rupture and difference" (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1991: 115) which then provide the basis for oppositional voices and oppositional action. This paper stands as one voice--one mapping--of that terrain; a voice which seeks to open a dialogue over crucial issues about the changing shape of education in an era of fast capitalism.

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